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SOME ENGLISH INTERIORS.

BY
MRS. MARGARET B. WRIGHT.

EDMUND YATES paper, *The*

World, has given its readers

a series of articles running through the year, and describing the homes and daily characteristic surroundings of various distinguished people in the worlds of science, literature, art and politics.

These articles are evidently written by a hand much more definitely journalistic than artistic—a hand whose treatment of the decorative features of these homes tends rather to a style of glittering generalities, a massing of details into a general broad effect of “Sèvres porcelain,” “Louis Quinze style,” “artistic bric-a-brac,” etc., but still the hand is deft and definite enough to make very pleasant pictures of interiors, into which their creators and owners have put much taste and knowledge.

One of the most interesting descriptions is of the home of Madame Valleria, the singer, at Bosworth House, Leicester. To enter Bosworth House one passes first through a lofty gateway half hidden in the luxuriant ivy draping, the lichen-grown and mellowed wall, and suddenly emerges from shade of spreading lime trees into the brightness of a verdant lawn, where roses grow in bewildering confusion and where the visitor must perforce linger an instant to admire the peach-pink of the Socrates roses, the pale blush of the Malmaison, and the crimson glow reflected from yellow leaves of the sunset tea rose, which the mistress of the house brought last year from Florida.

The front door of the house is screened by a porch of Gothic trellis work, which forms also a small conservatory, the windows of which are filled with colored glass in diamond-shaped panes after the prevailing fashion of George the Third's time. The entrance hall abounds in those richly carved oaken settles and presses for which Lancashire is famous, and on one of them rests the wooden desk upon which Prince Charles Edward is believed to have signed the order for the retreat of his troops from Derby. The pendant lamp in center of ceiling is enclosed in a frame of old English beaten iron work, and on the walls hangs a series of prints published just a century. A large rug of opussum skins partially covers the pavement of flagstones, from which pavement two steps of polished oak lead to the foot of a broad staircase, which had already attained respectable antiquity when Charles First slept at Market Harborough the night before his great disaster at Naseby. At top of this antique staircase a wide door opens upon a long dining-room, but before this door is reached the visitor is impressed by a vast pseudo-Gothic window filled with medallions and portraits of painted glass and dimly lighting the wide corridor.

Among the characteristic furniture of the inner hall are a tall clock, with appropriate admonitory inscription from Newstead Abbey, more quaint muniment chests, presses, and settles, a portrait of the first duke of Buckingham, by Hans Holbein, from the Stowe collection, some Florentine chairs inlaid with brass and ivory, and a rare Chippendale sideboard, on which ferns, palms and tropical flowers relieve the somewhat sombre colors of the painted window behind them. The door next the entrance porch is Madame Valleria's little study. Near the oak book case hangs a portrait Tietjens sent her from the singer's death bed.

The chief feature of the dining-room, with its green and gold paper, is a massive mantel piece in black oak and Dutch tiles, and in the center of which is another curious clock, together with a still more curious medallion of Robin Hood and Maid Marian in beaten copper. The low ceiling is traversed by carved oaken beams, and over the more modern side tables are landscapes by Schulten and Bullen, and horses by Herring. Successive occupants of Bosworth House seem to have vied with each other in altering and adding to the original structure, and some four score years ago one of them built the spacious drawing-room at the back, which adds so much to its many delightful architectural anachronisms. The high French windows look out upon an open lawn, where scent of roses mingle with that of white syringas, lilacs and Portugal laurels. A curiously carved oak cabinet fills one entire end of the room. It was once the state bed of the Abbots of Whalley; a panel in the center bears the effigies of Philip and Mary, and the words “Ralph Reresly, 1556.” It was converted into its present

shape from a design by Madame Valleria herself. Opposite the door is a powerful American organ, and before it stands a remarkable inlaid table, which came originally from some looted palace at Lahore, and which curiously resembles a peacock's tail.

Amid water colors by David Cox hangs a life-size portrait of Madame Valleria in inlaid frame of satin wood, walnut and gold, a present from the principal supporters of the New York Academy of Music. Between windows is a satin wood chiffonier inlaid with the familiar emblems of music and holding jeweled Louis Quatorze plates, miniatures of Lady Hamilton, Madame Maintenon, and George the Third, and a Capo di Monti drinking cup, as well as all the scores of the operas in which Madame Valleria sings. If one can imagine green plants and bright flowers to be scattered here and there in every variety of vases upon quaintly-shaped tables of black oak, or still blacker Spanish mahogany, and voluptuous chairs and couches in golden bronze plush and velvet embroidery, the picture becomes approximately complete.

Hawthorne Lodge, the London home of Madame Marie Rose Mapleson, is another of these pen portraits. Passing through the vestibule in Pompeian tiles, the visitor finds himself in the dim religious light of a passage hung with fleecy tapestries from looms of Asia Minor. The attention is at once attracted by the stuffed head of one of Lord Dunmore's short horns, and by a proof before the letter of Jallabert's well known picture of Chiswick Water, beneath which hang photographs of the fair mistress of the house in garb of Lucrezia Borgia, Carmen, Colomba and Fidelio. At the foot of the staircase leading from the entrance hall to the boudoir above, a quaint four-handled Flemish vase in blue faience on a marble pedestal holds a spreading *areca aurea*, while above hangs a life-size photograph of Madame Rose Mapleson in the matchless costume of Djelma in Auber's *Premier Jour de Bonheur*.

From the windows of the long double drawing-room one looks down upon a well turfed and sloping grass plot with its one great sycamore and many flowering hawthornes. The wall paper and heavy draperies form an harmonious arrangement in old gold and natural tints, with a striking dado of sage green and brown, and foamy white under-curtains held back by broad bands of bronze satin. Fragile gilt chairs of the Louis Quatorze time, consoles, encoignures, chiffoniers, cabinets in boule and ormoulu, Dresden and Sèvres china, all contribute to the graceful and airy French character of the ensemble. Pieces of Eastern embroidery here and there brighten the black satin upholstery of chairs and divans and ottomans, in the midst of which rises a solitary, broad leaved palm. A conspicuous object is De Neuville's delicious water color sketch of Madame Rose in Arcadian Shepherdess dress. Beside the door are suspended Vander Weyde photographs of Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone, with appropriate autograph inscriptions, and beyond a fine Naval Engagement by Marshall.

The chief feature of the embroidery-covered mantel piece is an exquisite Louis XVI. clock. On each side is a painting of cavalry soldiers by Detaille. Before one fireplace lies a rug of Russian squirrel skin, before the other a panther skin surrounded by border of buffalo hide. The grand piano is covered with autograph books, photograph albums and portraits.

Still another of these musical interiors is that of Carl Rosa, now remarried and living with wife and children in Harrow Road. Carl Rosa tells his friends that, while music is his profession, politics and pictures are his hobbies, and there is scarcely a detail in his dwelling which does not more or less illustrate his profession of faith. Just inside the entrance hall hangs an ancient painting of the Canterbury Pilgrims. The dining-room beyond contains a glorious Hagar and Ishmael by Malderelli, which seems to diffuse a golden glow over the whole apartment. Around it, in massive frames, are grouped small paintings by Jutz. Close by the door is a fine flower piece by Fantin, and on each side the fireplace a thunder storm in Saxon Switzerland, by Pohl, and Schlesinger's well known picture of a Prussian Vedette. In another part of the room is a somewhat gloomy picture of swamp and wood by the actor, Joseph Jefferson.

A collection of photographs covers a sideboard opposite the door. In its midst towers a large one of Gladstone, who seems to look down approvingly on Marie Rose in coquettish costumes. The staircase is decorated with buffalo horns brought from Salt Lake City and trophies of Indian arms collected in San Francisco. A pretty smoking-room on the first landing is lined with bright water color sketches of English scenery, while two small cabinets are filled with faded wreaths and Indian

curios which belonged to Parepa. In the salon above is a grand piano, by Erard, a miracle, because it dates from the exhibition of 1865, on which lie in careless confusion several ivory and gold batons, presented to Carl Rosa during his career. Over it hangs a striking half length portrait of Parepa Rose by Gurney of New York. Marble statues and rare Sèvres china lend aid to adornment of this pleasant drawing-room, but Carl Rosa values neither one or the other so much as the conductive music stand of rosewood presented by his native town.

The door of Mrs. Langtry's house in Eaton Square is opened by a young celestial in pigtail and surcoat of purple silk. There are colors of footmen in attendance, but the picturesque substitute for a boy in buttons is Wang Loo. He conducts the visitor into a morning-room furnished with a capacious couch of black satin elegantly embroidered with asters, mignonette, hyacinth, polyanthus and narcissus, blue and gold. Tables are covered with books from Bret Harte to Samuel Pepys, and on a desk lies an elephant tusk paper knife inscribed “Pandora, 1875.” In the drawing-room over head hangs her own portrait by Poynter, not one of his happiest efforts, and various other pictures amid books, screens, and flowers, thrown together with that cunning carelessness which gives a pretty room the charm of elegant occupancy and not after the solemn manner of the best parlors of the *petite bourgeoisie*.

In the dining-room also everything exhales an atmosphere of good taste and elegant refinement. The surroundings are, however, what may be described as of elegant severity of character. There is no attempt at mere prettiness in *figurines de Saxe* and richly perfumed flowers. The dinner service is exquisite in this simplicity, being of pure white porcelain sparsely but daintily decorated with gold and bearing the interlaced capitals L. L. The crystal is en suite with the china, purely white and transparent, and bearing the same monogram.

The stately home of Lewis Morris at Penbryn, in Wales, is that of that almost *rara avis*, a wealthy poet. As you enter the house you find yourself in a low hall panelled with dark wood and holding a rare collection of tropical birds in a glass case in one angle. Around the cornice runs a broad band of dark blue lighted by the owner's favorite mottoes in golden letters, a very attractive method of decoration. Here are *Fide et Amore* of the Bolyns, from a branch of which family the Welsh Morris' claim descent; the *Semper Badam* of Anne Bolyn's daughter, Good Queen Bess, with various other mottoes in decorative but unreadable Welsh, as well as a quotation from the owner's best known book, *The Epic of Hades*, applied to Cobden by Mr. Bright in his speech at Bradford on the occasion of the unavailing of the statue of that worthy:

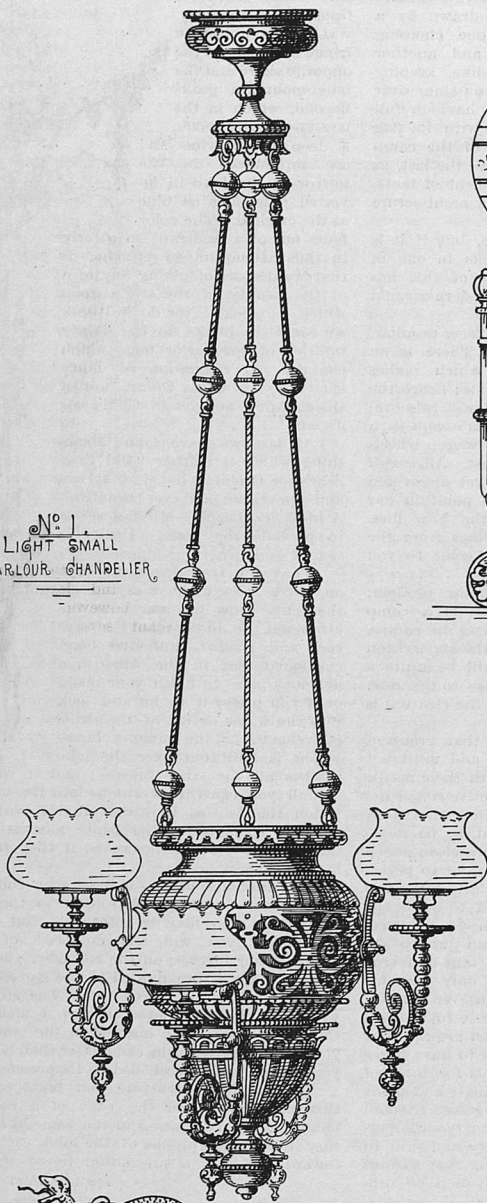
“Though knowledge be a step which few may climb,
Yet duty is a path which all may tread.”

Above the high wooden mantel are three wooden shields, on which are the three bulls heads of the Bolyns quartered with the three leopards assumed by the author's ancestor, Lewis Morris, the Antiquary, a poet at the beginning of the last century. Here, too, are portraits of the King and Queen of Greece, presented by their majesties in admiration of the author's treatment of the Greek myths in *The Epic of Hades*.

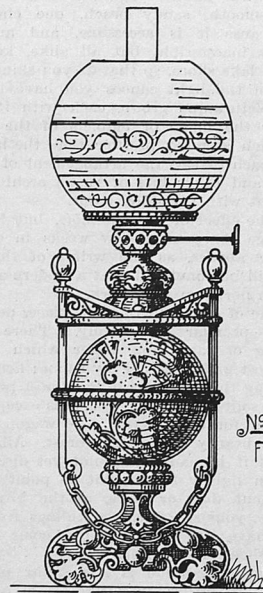
In the drawing-room are two interesting Madonnas by the younger Francia, found by their owner in Bologna, a good Van der Velde on panel, a good example of the sea painter Macheren, and a picture of great interest to Welsh people of the owner's own ancestor, Lewis Morris of Penbryn, the Burns of Wales. But it is in the library that Mr. Morris is most at home. The picturesque pine ceiling is relieved with colored boxes, the Turkish rugs and Japanese wall paper of red and gold make a sober setting for the long lines of working volumes which it contains. For their owner cares more for the inside than for the outside of books and to him rich bindings are abominable. In fact, the only well bound volumes are the regulation school and college prizes which, “like bright Seraphim in a burning row,” fill up a corner of the precious book space, not wholly we suspect to their owner's satisfaction.

ORNAMENTAL ARTICLES.—A prime advantage of movable articles of room ornament is that they impart an artistic finish to furniture. There is nothing to admire in the side view of the projecting edge of the shelf mounting of a piece of furniture, but place a vase upon it and it is wholly transformed, serving simply as a base. Ornaments also, by their scenic effects, answer the very objects formerly aimed at by costly inlays and elaborately carved shapes in furniture.

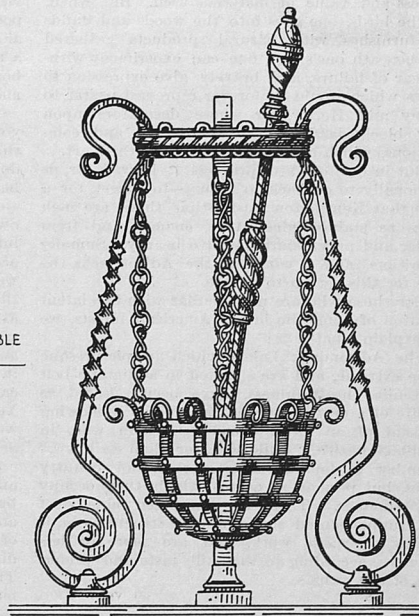
N^o 1.
6 LIGHT SMALL
PARLOUR CHANDELIER.



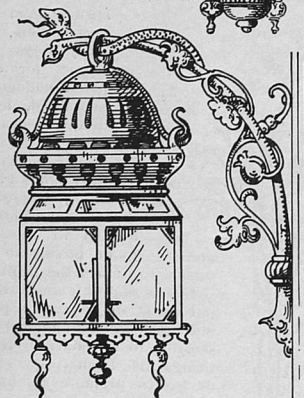
N^o 2.
FANCY TABLE
LAMP.



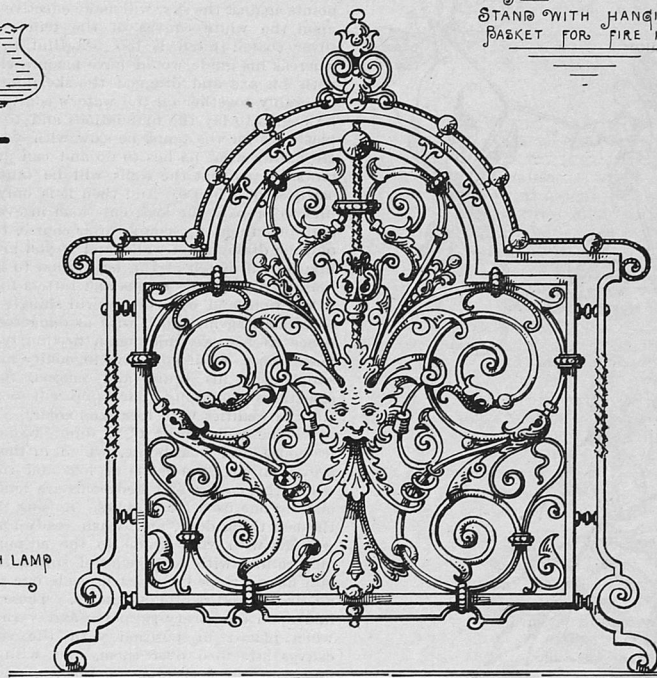
N^o 3.
STAND WITH HANGING
BASKET FOR FIRE IRONS.



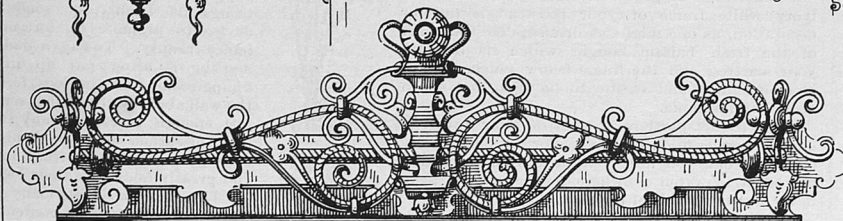
N^o 4.
BRACKET WITH LAMP
FOR HALL



N^o 5
SCREEN FOR FIRE PLACE



N^o 6
FENDER WITH REST FOR
FIRE IRONS



N^o 7.
LIBRARY CANDLESTICK

